

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COORDINATING COUNCIL
HELD
DECEMBER 3, 2009**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Frank E. Shelp, Department of Behavioral Health
Commissioner Rhonda Medows, Department of Community Health
Commissioner B. J. Walker, Department of Human Services
Commissioner Albert Murray, Department of Juvenile Justice
Commissioner Brian Owens, Department of Corrections
Senator Renee Unterman, Member of Senate
Stanley Jones, family member of a consumer
Julie Spores, consumer representative
Diane Reeder, parent representative
Bill McDonald, ex-officio, Governor's Office

No appointment to date from the House of Representatives

Note: Sandra Morris attended Council meeting in error. She is a member of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Board.

Frank E. Shelp, Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities called the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., December 3, 2009. Commissioner Shelp, Chair of the Council welcomed the members to the Council and each member appointed introduced themselves. As Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health, the statute mandates that Commissioner Shelp serve as Chairperson.

OPENING REMARKS BY COMMISSIONER SHELP

Commissioner Shelp reported that this meeting was primarily an organizational meeting. The Council is made up of four agency heads that have interests in MHDDAD, one appointment from the Senate and House of Representatives, governor's ex-officio member and three representatives from stakeholders outside of government.

Commissioner Shelp noted that the Council was created as a product of HB-228 and has a purpose and mission in identifying overlapping services regarding funding and policy issues in the behavioral health system. He said that there are clearly areas of over-lap and this is an opportunity for us to discuss and make recommendations to align the investments that we are making in providing services to this population. This, in addition, to creating consistency across agencies of how consumers with disabilities are treated.

SWEARING IN OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

The swearing in and acceptance of oath of the community Council members was conducted by Steve Dominy of the Department's legal staff. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor and swearing in is not required.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR AND SECRETARY

A Motion was made by Commissioner Rhonda Medows and seconded by Commissioner Owens to elect Commissioner Murray as Vice Chair. Commissioner Murray was unanimously approved as Vice Chair. A Motion was made by Diane Reeder and seconded by Commissioner Owens to elect Commissioner B. J. Walker as Secretary. Commissioner Walker was unanimously approved as Secretary.

ADOPTION OF COUNCIL'S BYLAWS

After much discussion the following changes were made to the Council's Bylaws.

Article I: approved

Article II: approved

Article III: approved

Article IV: Strike Section 8 of any mention of Executive Committee.

Article V: Section 1: Frequency of meetings was approved. However, it was recommended that the site of the meeting be rotated. Strike *"in Atlanta"*. Recommendation was that the Council should meet more often than quarterly. Suggestion was made to meet again in January or February 2010 and bring back suggestions as to the areas that cross agencies and identify and focus on the top issues.

Section 5: Strike *"and that any action thereby ratified by the Council at the next regular meeting"*.

Article VI: Section 1: Delete any reference to Executive Committee.

Article VII: Add a "Confidentiality" section to comply with federal, state and the Georgia Open Records Act.

Article VIII: approved

Article IX: approved

ORGANIZATIONAL INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION

The Council discussed that a good place to begin looking for "funding" is by looking at areas where agencies' services overlap. The core mission of the Council appears to be how to maintain services and avoid funding conflicts between agencies and to maximize efforts and establish policies, practices and goals, whereby funding for services can be maximized.

It was discussed that the Council build on the existing data that has already been gathered over the years to speed things up rather than ending up like so many study committees that simply duplicate the efforts of their predecessors by recreating the same information.

It would appear that issues can be identified in Council meetings, but most of the work will be done behind the scenes. The discussion centered on the fact that the Council has to deal with a harsh reality. The money that is available for services right now will more than likely not become a reality. Council must work on efficiencies in all areas, but we need to focus on the largest issues that will leverage the most for what we have. Children are a good area to focus on because there are areas where federal dollars are not being maximized in the state of Georgia. If parents of children are treated, then children would also receive benefit.

Commissioner Shelp said that the Department of Behavioral Health has an obligation to implement the Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice and Olmstead. He said that some of the priorities should be children, housing, recidivism and providing a continuum of care that is accessible at various levels. He noted that many of our consumers usually enter the hospital through the back door or from the back seat of a police car.

The Council noted that a system of care for children is a moving target. In order to provide the services that we need, more funding is needed. There was a discussion of a federal match issue that should be tackled. Given the current fiscal situation, the target issues that all state agencies presently have means that the only thing we can do is go after and identify sources funding that haven't been tapped yet.

Recommendation 1: Try and coordinate services to pull down more federal match to help satisfy Olmstead and DOJ compliance. At this time in this fiscal economy, we have to go outside of the Department to do so.

Recommendation 2: Identify untapped funding sources and begin to work toward getting over the impediments to pulling down dollars. Where are the dollars in Georgia that could be used as a match? We need to investigate as many potential funding opportunities as possible.

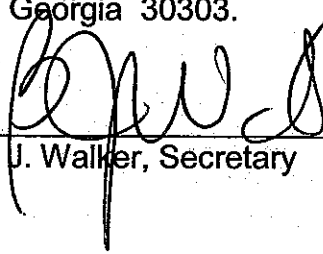
Recommendation 3: Create an Ad Hoc Committee to define task of funding maximization. Commissioner B. J. Walker will chair the committee. Members: Bill McDonald, Stan Jones, Albert Murray, Julie Spores and Sandra Morris.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15pm – Motion by Commissioner Rhonda Medows and seconded by Commissioner Albert Murray.

Recommendations will be sent out for the dates of the 2010 quarterly meetings.

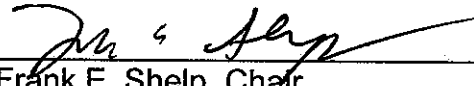
THE NEXT MEETING

Next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday, January 6 at 10:30am – noon in 29-250, 2 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.



B. J. Walker, Secretary

APPROVED:



Frank E. Shelp, Chair